

his deep levels of compassion, and his efforts helped create a more just and equitable society for all.

Even after he retired, Pete, as was his way, refused to rest. He continued to promote bipartisan solutions in Washington and continued to remind each of us of our duties to the American people. My prayers and condolences go out to his wife, Nancy, and all of his family. Amidst their grief, I take heart they may know that his legacy outlives his days and that this body will be forever better for his service.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, we mourn the loss of Pete Domenici, a former Senate colleague, a respected and leading voice in bipartisanship, and, most of all, a friend.

Pete had the distinction of being the longest serving Senator in New Mexico's history. He spent almost half a century as a public servant.

Most knew Pete for his outspokenness on energy and budget issues, but I remember him best for his commitment and dedication on behalf of Americans struggling with mental illness.

In 2008, two Senators—Paul Wellstone, a liberal Democrat from Minnesota, and Pete Domenici, a conservative Republican from New Mexico—came together to pass legislation that prohibited health insurance companies from treating mental health differently from physical health benefits.

The Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act finally set mental health and substance abuse benefits on equal footing with other health benefits, ensuring fairness in deductibles, copayments, provider networks, and lifetime limits.

Those two Senators couldn't have been more different, but they each had family members who were touched by mental illness.

Pete Domenici and Paul Wellstone asked, Why should we treat illnesses of the brain any different than a cancer, diabetes, or heart disease?

That shared bond brought them together. It is why they spent years fighting with insurance companies about the importance of mental health coverage and ultimately got a law passed.

The Wellstone-Domenici Parity Act laid the groundwork for so much of what we fought for in the Affordable Care Act: the idea that people should have access to coverage, regardless of what their medical needs are.

You see, the ACA built off this law by requiring that all individual market insurance plans cover mental health and substance abuse services as an "essential health benefit."

Thanks to Pete's hard work, millions of Americans no longer have to fight for mental health benefits or addiction treatment benefits, so important in the face of today's opioid crisis.

Pete taught us that mental illness is exactly that—an illness—and that those who suffer from any illness deserve equal rights and access to care.

Senator Domenici was also a strong advocate for immigration reform.

Back in 2002, he signed on as a cosponsor of the original DREAM Act, legislation that I introduced to give a path to citizenship to talented young immigrants who grew up in the country.

As the son of an Italian immigrant mother and an Italian-born father who earned citizenship after his service in WWI, Pete understood firsthand the immigrant experience.

He once said, "I understand this whole idea of a household with a father who is American and a mother who is not, but they are living, working, and getting ahead. I understand that they are just like every other family in America. There is nothing different. They have the same love, same hope, same will and same aspirations as those of us who were born here have."

Pete didn't just talk; he put his money where his mouth was.

In 2006, he voted for the McCain-Kennedy comprehensive immigration reform bill that included the DREAM Act.

It passed the Republican-controlled Senate on a strong bipartisan vote, but unfortunately, the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives never brought it to a vote.

Senator Domenici's work in the Senate is a great example of the good that can come from bipartisanship—of what can happen when we start working together to get something done for the American public.

It is my hope that we can carry on Pete's legacy of equal rights for all through bipartisan means.

My condolences to the Domenici family and thank you for sharing such an earnest man with us.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor former Senator Pete V. Domenici of New Mexico, who passed away September 13 in Albuquerque. It was a privilege to call Pete a friend and to work with him as a Senate colleague and member of the Appropriations Committee.

Senator Domenici had a great ability to bring people together to work on solutions to complicated challenges like the budget deficit, national security, and energy policy. His passing closes the book on a life well-lived as a public servant dedicated to his family, his State, and our Nation.

My condolences go out to his lovely wife, Nancy, and their family.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for yesterday's vote on the motion to table Senate amendment No. 871 to H.R. 2810, the National Defense Authorization Act, to repeal existing authorizations for the use of military force. I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on the motion to

invoke cloture on substitute amendment No. 1003 to H.R. 2810, the National Defense Authorization Act. I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on Calendar No. 109, confirmation of the nomination of Pamela Hughes Patenaude to be Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. I would have voted yea.●

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 197, the motion to invoke cloture on McCain-Reed amendment No. 1003, as modified, the substitute to H.R. 2810, the National Defense Authorization Act for 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.●

NORTH KOREA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to address one of the most pressing and most challenging national security issues facing our Nation: North Korea's growing nuclear and ballistic missile programs and its continued belligerent behavior.

North Korea has developed an active nuclear weapons program and is making considerable progress in developing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles that can reach our allies and partners in the region, including South Korea and Japan, U.S. territories like Guam, and, likely, the continental United States as well.

The time for illusions about North Korea's programs, or wishful thinking about our policy options, is past.

With each passing day, North Korea's continued defiance of the international community makes it clear that the Trump administration's policy of maximum pressure is yielding minimal results.

If the United States continues on the path laid out by President Trump, there are only two realistic outcomes, both bad: North Korea becomes a nuclear power or a large-scale conventional war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula that would result in the loss of hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of lives.

If our policy options leave us with only capitulation or war as possible outcomes, those policies are deeply flawed. There should be a lot of space between war and capitulation on the Korean Peninsula.

I strongly believe that we must therefore adjust our strategy to fill that space with an all-out "diplomatic surge," one that results in serious, hard constraints on North Korea's nuclear ambitions and a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous Northeast Asia for all.

The initial objective of this surge would be to begin a diplomatic process, with Pyongyang first verifiably halting